

The Philatelic Communicator

Journal of the American Philatelic Society Writers Unit #30

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- R. BRYAN -

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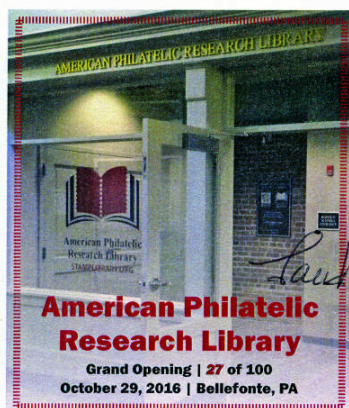
APRL Grand Opening




On October 29 hundreds of people visited the American Philatelic Research Library to watch the grand opening of the new spaces, the final act of a long anticipated expansion of library and American Philatelic Society offices. Photo above shows some of the visitors waiting to see the ribbon cutting ceremony.

The APRL issued a special commemorative cover, shown at right, franked using the recent inverted jenny commemorative stamp. That plane, in its day, carried mail across the country with stops at Bellefonte, Pennsylvania.

APRL Continued on Page 11




American Philatelic Research Library
Grand Opening Station
October 29, 2016 | Bellefonte, PA 16823

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Roger A. Bury
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David Crotty From the Editor

Memories from previous elections

On page 11 of this issue is a 2001 photo of APS Executive Director Robert Lamb showing the new Match Factory acquisition to David Beech, curator of Philatelic Collections at the British Library. The Match Factory was a leap into the void by people who had a vision. That vision was realized last month in spectacular form during the grand opening of the American Philatelic Research Library.

I am reminded of the political uproar that consumed us at that time. I find that memory vibrates loudly with the two year USA presidential election campaign that ended this November 8th. During that time and during a few following APS elections angry partisans predicted doom. Fake news stories were spread around about various contestants. Sometimes the membership bought those stories, sometimes they saw the vision.

Who knew that a national election fueled by massive fake news engines would occur these 15 years later. The philatelic world was ahead of its time.

Fortunately the APS members appreciated the vision that Robert Lamb had of greatly expanded APS offices and a very impressive APRL. David Beech returned this month as the keynote speaker at the grand opening. He emphasized a word that is heard a lot these days, especially in these pages: Digitization.

The Future of Philatelic Publishing

The CHICAGOPEX 2016 literature exhibit judges critique was an unusual event. Here were three old men at the table talking with the passion of young revolutionaries. Their point was that the future of philatelic publishing depended largely on the ability of the Societies and Editors to blend print with the web and with digital printing.

Societies have been lax in making their journals available to potential members and many have been especially deficient in maintaining a useful article index.

Then on our return from that show, what appears in my inbox is this fantastic debriefing by Peter Thy, starting on the next page. Thanks Peter!

Dave



Lloyd de Vries *President's Message*

Future of Philately

On behalf of the AFDCS [and WU30; my name sign had both on it!], I attended two sessions on the Future of Philately at the American Philatelic Center in Bellefonte, PA, on October 28, held in conjunction with the dedication of the new quarters of the American Philatelic Research Library. One was a private working lunch with board members of the American Philatelic Society and APRL and the heads of major APS affiliates, such as the AFDCS. The other was a public session, which was live-streamed on Facebook.

The consensus was that philately itself is alive and well. While stamp collectors certainly are not as great

a percentage of the U.S. population as a century or half-century ago, there are still quite a few of us. Keep in mind that there are about twice as many Americans today as in 1950.

Where stamp collecting is hurting, however, is in Organized Philately. Most stamp collecting organizations are losing members. Publications are losing subscribers, or ceasing publication.

There were no solutions offered, nor was it intended that any be offered. The conference was intended to lay out the problem and propose how solutions might be found. Toward that end, periodic conferences will be held. The setup was likened to the United Nations Security Council, with five "permanent" members and the others to be "rotating" members. The five will be the APS, stamps dealers (definitely ASDA, probably NSDA, maybe APS itself), the National Postal Museum, the USPS, and the American Topical Association or major affiliates including the ATA.



CHICAGOPEX 2016 Literature Debriefing

Peter Thy

Editor's Note: Peter Thy was one of the philatelic literature judges, with Dan Warren and Rich Drews, at CHICAGOPEX. The discussion was extraordinary. I was bummed that we didn't have a recording of this. Then Peter was stuck at the airport after the show and he took the opportunity to provide us with some very important commentary on the proceedings:



Literature Judge
Peter Thy

After a successful completion of the literature competition at CHICAGOPEX 2016, it seems appropriate to sum up some general impressions and to speculate on present and future trends in philatelic literature as seen from a judging point of view. The comments below are selected for their interest to philatelic writers and are, needless to say, based on my

personal (admittedly rather limited) experiences and thus not always shared with my fellow judges.

Recent Literature Exhibit Trends

We have in the past several years seen a steady decline in the number of literature exhibits submit-

ted for philatelic exhibits. This trend was hopefully reversed at CHICAGOPEX by a record number of exhibits (a total of 35). Part of the surge this time was due to a handful of individual journal articles submitted on their own merit, irrespective of their journal of origin. Another trend we have seen is a significant surge in full colored, large volume, hard bound monographs that often appear to be self-published by their author(s).

Journal Articles and Compilations of Past Articles

Journal articles are the bloodline of philatelic literature and philatelic knowledge. Thus their inclusion in literature exhibits is certainly most appropriate and welcome. Another type of related exhibits would be a collection of previous articles with common themes. It appears that the latter basically only requires a common subject and the inclusion of at least one article recently published. We did not see any of the latter types this time, but they have certainly appeared in the past.

Individual articles are judged on their own merits and potentially could receive higher rewards than their host journals. They are, however, not completely independent since editorial choices and requirements of the host journal can have an effect on their success.

Debriefing continued on page 4

A fair number of the submitted articles this time lacked proper source documentations in the form of endnotes and/or reference lists. In some cases this might be justified (popular treatment), but certainly not in the case for work that claims to be of a scholarly nature. The alternative that the host journal should not require or impose source documentation is unacceptable, but offers an example of how an individual article may rise or sink with its host journal.

Desktop and Web Publishing

Desktop publishing programs have become widespread – so much that it has become difficult today to find a piece of philatelic literature that does not utilize at least some aspects of desktop publishing. Concurrently, the availability of cheaper color printing has had the added result that nearly all philatelic publication today use some kind of full color reproduction (color offset or laser printing). To a certain extent this has counteracted the effect of increased mailing expenses for some journals.

Another recent development is the availability of web-based publishing offers. The result is that today, we all can write our own book using one of the available page maker programs, save the completed manuscript as a pdf-file, and subsequently upload it on a publishing website. All we need to do is to pay the bill, make some simple choices, and to wait for the package to arrive in our driveway. Obviously, this is a good development.

The main problem, however, is that this approach, we think, apparently relieves us of our duties as author (or publisher) to carefully considering and planning our project, such as to contemplating if some of our material would be better presented as scans on an included CD or in a table. It is simply too easy to print 500 pages instead of carefully editing the work down to 200 pages – and the expenses may not be all that different.

Another drawback is that – as it appeared this time – all too often the author forgets to contemplate common and widely accepted book styles rules, such as the structuring into title pages, imprint page, foreword (not ‘foreward,’ which is not an English word), introduction, and the main text in chapters. The pagination conventions for books are particularly widely violated. Self-publishing authors should carefully consider the standard book format before submitting to one of the available publishing websites. These do not perform the standard editorial

and proofreading duties of professional publishing companies, even that some may provide the ISBN number and thus technically may be the publisher of record. It is too late to regret such an omission when the book pile has arrived in your driveway.

Interconnectivity of Traditional Literature and Web-Based Resources

The Internet offers an enormous opportunity for extending the space of a book or journal to store vast amounts of information in the form of databases and background information, such as cover censuses. It also offers options for updating and showing new discoveries as well as allowing for direct reader feedback. This opportunity is something we all still struggle with and that we have yet fully to embrace. This struggle was repeatedly touched upon during the feedback session.

Society websites (or Internet folders) are often, but not always, used to store extensive indexes and searchable archival journal runs. It can also be used to store large volumes of information and downloadable active spreadsheets. It is not reasonable to require more; however, if such extensions of a journal exist this should clearly be pointed out, perhaps in the synopsis, to guide the judges to available Internet resources.

Many journals are already being offered in an electronic version in addition to the traditional print version. Some societies have completely succeeded to transition to the electronic world. This time, we only saw one newsletter that was submitted as pdf-files stored on a CD. It is important to understand that there is no difference between an electronic version and a paper version of a journal. The only additional expectation for the electronic version is that this is interactive so the reader can just click on a link and directly being taken to a website or to his/her email program with the email address pre-selected.

The main problem to look out for is that the traditional journal may be completely dissolved into the electronic world and thus may cease to exist as a separate entity. The result could be that philatelic knowledge no longer can be recorded and indexed and these are for all practical purposes lost for the community and the future. It is thus important that journals attain separate entities in the electronic universe.

There is little doubt that the future for many of our smaller specialist societies includes a transition

to a dominating web presence. This could include easy access to current and past journals, comprehensive subject and author index of the journal, important resources such as postal rate compilations, electronic versions of society publications, question and answer blog, electronic versions of exhibits, videos of member meetings and annual general meetings, regular auction listings, and links to other societies and other important information. And anything else that we could wish for – only the Internet is the limit. How fast that will happen depends on many factors, but principally on the ageing of the membership, rise in postal rates, and availability of volunteers.

Source Documentation and Acknowledgements

Many books and journal articles lack standard minimum documentation requirements. The reason is understandable since philatelists are not professional researchers, but hobbyists that may not be aware of the opportunities and benefits good source documentation offers. Part of the blame is squarely with journal editors that may not require attention to such details. A good book with consistent source documentation, like end- or footnotes and a detailed reference list, will often fare well at philatelic literature shows as well with the readers. An additional thing to consider is that the reference to consulted articles and books should be sufficiently detailed to allow a librarian, unfamiliar with philatelic literature, to easily locate the book or article in question. All references to archival work should always include proper identification to the archives and its reference identification of the material used in addition to the general description of the material quoted. Likewise, reference to web-pages should include full link and the date the site was consulted for the simple reason that websites are of an ephemeral nature. The reason of this advice is that a researcher that reads your text will be able to confirm and follow-up on your results with the minimum of efforts.

Non-Traditional Literature

Non-traditional literature includes websites, blogs, videos, and podcasts (you may be able to suggest other categories). These may be serious review and research venues or light-hearted treatments also aimed at the general public. This time we only saw one example of a podcast. These types of literature are clearly part of our future as hobbyists and more attention is certainly warranted.

Synopses

Today a synopsis is a requirement for philatelic exhibits. These are, however, not yet a requirement for literature exhibitions, but have recently been recommended. This year we saw a highly diverse assemblage of synopses from missing completely, to basically useless, and to very well done. The latter contained the basic information of the publication and what to look out for when using it. There are at present no clear guidelines for literature synopses, but these may be forthcoming. In the meantime, it may be a good idea to look at the recommended styles for philatelic exhibits.

Physical Stage for Literature Exhibits

The literature competition is basically the stepchild at a philatelic exhibition, like CHICAGOPEX 2016. This is perhaps a bit of a surprise considering that over half of exhibits received were literature exhibits (35 literature and 56 philatelic exhibits). The 35 literature exhibits are equivalent to 35 single frame exhibits or only a quarter to a fifth of the total exhibit frames (290) (based from the fees paid by the exhibitors). The result was that the philatelic exhibits were reserved for two exhibit halls, while the literature exhibits were relegated to a single unmarked table in the fringes of the show space.

The awards banquet following the conclusion of judging is normally used to celebrate the exhibitors and their achievements. This is done by reading their names and exhibit titles and presenting the medal and other awards with a handshake and perhaps a photo opportunity. This was duly done at CHICAGOPEX, except that the literature awards were omitted, intentionally or by accident. The full award lists are, however, naturally included in the official *Palmares* that, although not available at the show, can be downloaded from the show's website in either a philatelic or a literature version.

Round-Up

Whether the stepchild, or not, this year's literature event at CHICAGOPEX was a most enjoyable event that saw many important exhibits forging new records and redefining the boundaries for philatelic literature. At the literature feedback session, a small, but dedicated, audience discussed, among other subjects, the electronic boundaries of philatelic literature.

In conclusion, a most enjoyable event from a judging point of view and hopefully also for the exhibitors and authors.



When An Editor or Publisher Says You Will.... Or You Won't



John Hotchner

It doesn't happen often; at least it shouldn't. But when it happens it can be traumatic.

Let's set the stage with two situations:

First, you send in a piece to an editor, and when the response comes back, you get a note saying that the editor does not want such-and-such subject raised in "his" publication. Or, he wants a tangential subject covered that you had not included. The situation is easy enough to deal with if you are willing to do as directed, but let's say for the sake of argument, that you don't agree.


Second, you are an Editor, and your Publisher rings you up and says, "Jack; I have an article/letter to the editor/essay done by one of our advertisers. He's a big fish, and I want you to include it prominently." Again, no problem if it is a good piece, germane to the hobby. But if it's a poorly written screed on something peripheral, what do you do?

Having faced both these situations during my writing and editing career, I have my own predisposi-

tions, but I am curious what our Members think, and how you have handled these situations if you have been pushed into such a corner.

Each of these kinds of situations is unique, with variables that can affect the outcome. For example, there is the degree to which you feel you need the work if you are being paid, your personal importance to the publication – Are there other people who can add the value to the publication that you do? Are there people lined up who would like your job as writer or editor (assuming you are being paid), the degree to which you feel a debt or even a personal connection to the person making the suggestion or giving the order?

I would venture to say that most of us would give in to higher authority, either willingly or grumpily, but others might threaten to resign, or find some other way of seeming to comply without giving in 100%.

With your answers I will do a follow up article in which I will also give mine. Confidentiality will be honored if requested. Please write to me on this subject at PO Box 1125, Falls Church, VA 22041-0125, or by email at jmhstamp@verizon.net. 

Letters: Digitization

Digitization of Society Journals

Hi David,

Just read your Editorial in the 2nd Q issue of *The Philatelic Communicator*. SPI (Sports Philatelists International) wants to digitize its journal (*Journal of Sports Philately*) which runs all the way back to 1962. Our digital versions date back a decade or so, which means we still have about 45 volumes of the journal to digitize. Any suggestions/recommendations on digitizing philatelic journals would be most appreciated. For example, is there a good company to approach to handle this for us? Are there specific formats that are preferable over others. I'm guessing searchable PDFs are the way to go. We have detailed indexes of every issue, but they're not in a database format. No doubt there are more questions that will need answers, but this is a start!

Cheers,

Mark Maestrone

Editor, JSP, President, SPI

markspi@prodigy.net, m.maestrone@gmail.com

Mark,

You bring up an important point. I would like to publish this letter and the answers I find in TPC if that's ok with you.

First, I have asked Gary Loew about his advice. Gary's business is digitizing records for large corporations and he is an APS and AAMS member (and probably more). I will let you know what he says.

At the same time for the AAMS, one member, Charlie Nelson, is in the process of digitizing the *AirPost Journal*, 12 issues per year since 1935 apparently by brute force. He has done about 20% of that since he started in July. You can see his results at the website page:

http://americanairmailssociety.org/html/airpost_journal.html

I did the scanning for three organizations about 10 years ago, simply by brute force but the job included much fewer pages than the AAMS job.

Your job involves four issues a year but they seem to be thick issues.

And yes, all projects that I have seen use the search-

able PDF. Quite a few philatelic groups have done this already to some extent. Some are up to date but some seem to have had someone working on it and then he or she quit 10-15 years ago.

As for the article index: some groups use an Excel spreadsheet and some do a text listing. Yours is the text listing. If we take all of your indexes and put them into one Word file you can easily search it by subject. (The American Air Mail Society does it this way but we are stuck at 2008) Maybe instead of one massive file you might want to do it by decade or something like that.

Again, this is a very important issue. I asked a few people to look over your question. When they answer I think we can work out a great program for you.

David Crotty

Hi David,

Wonderful! Glad my little letter provoked some thought and I look forward to hearing what folks have to say or recommend. I should add that I'm actually going to write a grant proposal to finance our task, so it should be possible to actually hire a professional for the project.

Many thanks!

Mark Maelstone.

Digitization Methods

As a followup to this is a letter from Charlie Nelson describing how he works with the ongoing AAMS digitization of the Old Airpost Journals:

Dave,

I've held back on this (discussion of methods) because I am still climbing the learning curve and I didn't want to put out info that was flawed. That being said I'll give it a shot.

I'm running Windows 10, my scanner is a Brother MFC-J6710DW multi-function center, Figure 1. It is a flatbed scanner with a sheet feeder. I do not use the sheet feeder for scanning the journals. I would have to dismember the journals. Johnny Johnson would not approve of that! A big plus of this scanner is it's large flatbed. It can scan about 11.8 x about 18 inches. This makes scanning journals much easier, even those with "letter" or A4 size pages as the open pages lay completely on the bed.

The software I am now using is "Scan Papyrus", Figure 2, at www.scanpapyrus.com. It is quite reasonable at \$30 for a home, multicomputer license. This software has some limitations, but it also has some big pluses in addition to the low cost. It seems to be

very solid, no crashes so far, and it has an automatic backup of each scan. In the event of a crash there is a recovery feature to retrieve the backup.

I create a custom page size to match a single page of the journal. I

then scan each page. For double page spreads I set

the page width to double the single page minus 1/10 of an

inch. This usually gives a

well centered page, but I

prescan and adjust if it necessary. As

you mentioned, every second

page is scanned upside down, but a single mouse click flips the page. I do text-only pages in 300 dpi or 400 dpi if there is any line drawing, excluding column logos. I use 400 dpi true gray scale for photo stuff e.g., stamp and cover images, photoes, an exception being photo ads which I do at 300 lpi. The gray scale can be tricky at times. Results vary due to several factors. Better quality can sometimes be had by using a different resolution. Lower resolution sometimes works better than higher.

I save the scans of an issue as a project and also export them to a set of PNG image files. This is my master copy. "Scan Papyrus" has the ability to create a PDF of a project, but it has limitations that make it a poor choice for this. Instead, I load the set of PNG files into Acrobat 10 and OCR them. The OCR process also deskews crooked pages. I then save the finished product as a PDF.

Acrobat is faster and is feature packed, but it has some serious shortcomings. It is prone to crashing and all work is lost unless you perform frequent manual backups. I had been creating PNG masters from Acrobat, however, I discovered that the saved images Acrobat created in this format were low quality and produced unsatisfactory PDFs if they were needed to reconstruct a lost set of files (see Acrobat crash above).

There are other steps I perform which are preparations for future enhancements of the Journal PDFs.

There are lots of sites on the internet that provide advice on the scanning project.

Maybe this will help a little.

Charley Nelson



Figure 1, Brother MFC=J6710DW



Figure 2, www.scanpapyrus.com

Reviews

Print & Electronic

Reviews in TPC are indexed at
www.wu30.org Journal page.
Searchable by Google.



Canada's Peace Tower

Philatelic Views of the Peace Tower by Gary Dickinson. 72 pages, 8 1/2 by 11 inches, card covers, spiral bound, British North America Philatelic Society, Ottawa, Ontario, 2016. ISBN 978-1-927119-67-9, \$40 CDN plus shipping from BNAPS Book Department, c/o Sparks Auctions, 1550 Carling Avenue Suite, 202, Ottawa ON K1Z 8S8, Canada, or www.bnaps.org/books/books.php.

One of Ottawa's parliament buildings, the Peace Tower, is a distinctive national symbol and is as popular as are the maple leaf and the beaver. This handbook looks at the many postal materials reflecting the building's image, with a focus on first day covers. The tower was built in the 1920s to replace the Victoria Tower that had burned down in 1916.

The first depiction of the Peace Tower on a Canadian postage stamp appeared on the 3-cent value of the 1927 set marking the 60th anniversary of the Confederation. Since then the tower is shown on more than 15 Canadian stamps. Countless postcards bear images of the tower and some are described in Dickinson's book. He also shows several First Flight covers with cachets that feature the tower. In the same chapter a few stamp booklet covers can be seen on which the Parliament buildings are prominent.

Chapter 3 of this handbook looks at FDCs of some of Canada's stamps related to the Peace Tower.

The first one is that 1927 Confederation anniversary issue and Dickinson shows the desirable George Eppstadt cachet. The first cachet known that depicts the tower was designed by A. C. Roessler for the 1933 UPU commemorative. Many more FDCs are illustrated for Peace Tower related stamps released during the King George VI era and up to recent releases, some bearing cachets by familiar names like Fleetwood and Colorano.

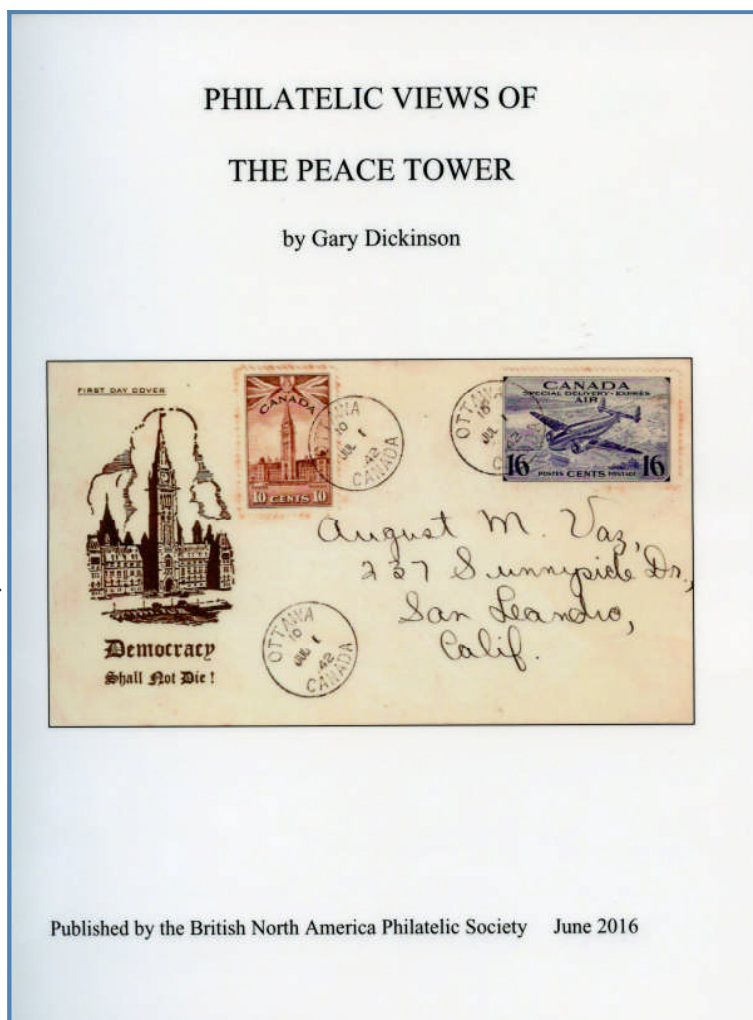
In fact Chapter 4 focuses on cachets depicting the Peace Tower, from early unknown cachet makers but also from familiar names like ArtCraft, Jackson, Velvatone, Artmaster, and the Canadian Post Office. Another chapter is devoted entirely to the work of Joseph C. Rosenbaum of Montreal, known as Rosecraft cachets. These include cachet varieties and also general purpose designs.

After the Canadian Post Office began issuing its own FDCs, it used some of the Rosecraft GP cachets as replacements for damaged covers. The Rosecraft GP story is rather complex with over 400 types known used for various issues and recorded in Appendix A of Dickinson's book. Another useful appendix is an index of all of the cachet makers for these issues. A list of references offers further background reading for the handbook.

The book is nicely laid out in 2-column format and the illustrations are quite good. Editing is well done with the exception of one section where the text correctly spells the name of the cachet maker A. W. Dargis, but figure captions spell it as "Dargas." Gary Dickinson, in addition to his prolific writing

of articles on Canada FDCs as well as editing *First Impressions*, the newsletter of the BNAPS First Day Cover Study Group, has contributed yet another fine monograph in this field.

Alan Warren



Icelandic Cancels

Icelandic Numeral Cancels 1903-1960: A Quantitative Study on Usage of Cancels 174-300 by Brynjólfur Sigurjónsson. 156 pages, 8 ¼ by 9 ¾ inches, hard-bound, Reykjavík, Iceland, 2016. ISBN 978-9979-72-375-2, \$89.99 plus shipping from www.blurb.com.

This is the second volume by Sigurjónsson that continues with the numeral cancellations of Iceland from his 2013 book which covered cancels numbered 1 to 173. In fact the page numbering in this second volume begins with page 203, although the numbering defies the convention of odd-numbered pages on the right side. Also there is no introductory text that mentions that this book is a continuation of the first volume.

The format is the same as the first volume. Each numeral cancel is listed with the name of the farm or town, the municipality, and the county, followed by the period of use and a rarity grade. Unfortunately the key to the type numbers and the rarity scale are not defined in this volume, making it imperative that the first volume is handy.

For each numeral type there is an outline map of Iceland showing the location, a chart showing num-

ber of cancels reported by year groups from 1902 to 1957, a copy of a cover or a stamp with the postmark, and a recent photo of the site of the collecting station. A few lines of text on each page expand on the information and also indicate whether the cancel now resides in the postal museum.

An appendix lists the collecting places in alphabetical order along with the municipality, the county, the numeral, and the page on which it is found in either volume 1 or 2 of this series.

The book ends with a list of acknowledgements of those who furnished information or copies of stamps and covers. One non-conventional aspect is that the pages are black with white printed text. However, the information is easily read but a few of the darker photographs are not as distinct as they might be.

For collectors of the numeral cancellations of Iceland these two books are a must-have, and bring earlier information up to date. A bibliography would help students of these cancels to review the prior work in this field.

Alan Warren

Reviews continued on Page 10

Icelandic numeral cancels 1903-1960

A quantitative study on usage of cancels 174-300



Brynjólfur Sigurjónsson

Ralph L. Sloat 1928-2016

Writers Unit member Ralph L. Sloat died August 14, 2016 at age 87. He wrote articles for the *United States Specialist*. The Bureau Issues Association (now United States Stamp Society) awarded Sloat its Walter W. Hopkinson Memorial Award in 1972 and again in 1975 for the best article or series of articles in the journal. Sloat also authored two monographs: *The Airmail Special Delivery Stamps of the United*

States (1977) and *Farley's Follies* (1979). After obtaining degrees at Wesleyan and New York Universities he joined the United States Public Health Service in 1956 where he spent his entire career. Sloat retired in 1995 as Chief, Grants Management Branch, Agency for Health Care Policy and Research. He was predeceased by his wife Nancy, and is survived by three stepchildren.

Alan Warren

Herman Herst's Unpublished Books

Put a Stamp On It! by Herman Herst, Jr. 362 pages, card covers, 6 x 9 inches, Lee Ann and Veronica's Publishing, ISBN 1-940197-38-4, \$16.99 from Amazon and similar sources.

Like the proverbial Phoenix rising from its ashes, a new collection of entertaining stamp stories by the late "Pat" Herst has surfaced and is now off the press. The author of the popular *Nassau Street*, and wonderful anecdotes of the hobby as revealed in his *The Compleat Philatelist* and *Stories to Collect Stamps By*, Herman Herst continues his delightful observations as a veteran dealer and writer. This latest volume was compiled and brought into print by his son Kenneth. Originally written in the early 1990s, the manuscript got lost among Pat's papers, only to be found by his late wife Ida.

The topics reflected in these 77 articles exhibit the author's wide range of knowledge and acquaintance with some of the giants of the hobby. These include Raynor Hubbell, George Sloane, Henry Needham, Harry Konwiser, Prescott Thorp, Lucius Jackson, Franklin Roosevelt, Elmer Long and many others. Other subjects that Herst touches upon are Vin Fiz, the Farleys, old-time dealers of Nassau Street, the Universal Postal Union, prisoner of war correspondence, the U.S. zeppelin issues, and other familiar topics.

Each article is short so this is the type of book that one can pick up and put down at leisure. One can also learn about the founder of West Point, the creator of the Ponzi scheme, the fad of collecting plate numbers, and some little known details about the Kansas-Nebraska overprints.

At times the subject of philately seems rather remote from some of Herst's anecdotes. One example is his detailed retelling of the story of the kidnapping of Charley Ross (misspelled Charlie in the book), son

of a wealthy Philadelphia merchant in 1876. The boy was held for ransom but the kidnappers were never apprehended, the ransom not paid, and the eventual fate of poor Charley never determined. The only "philatelic" connection is that the ransom letters were sent by mail.

On the other hand his discovery of the imperforate playing cards revenue, Scott R29a, is quite a tale. Herst noticed a few boxes of cards from a particular manufacturer that were sealed with an imperforate variety of the normal tax stamp. He then ordered a

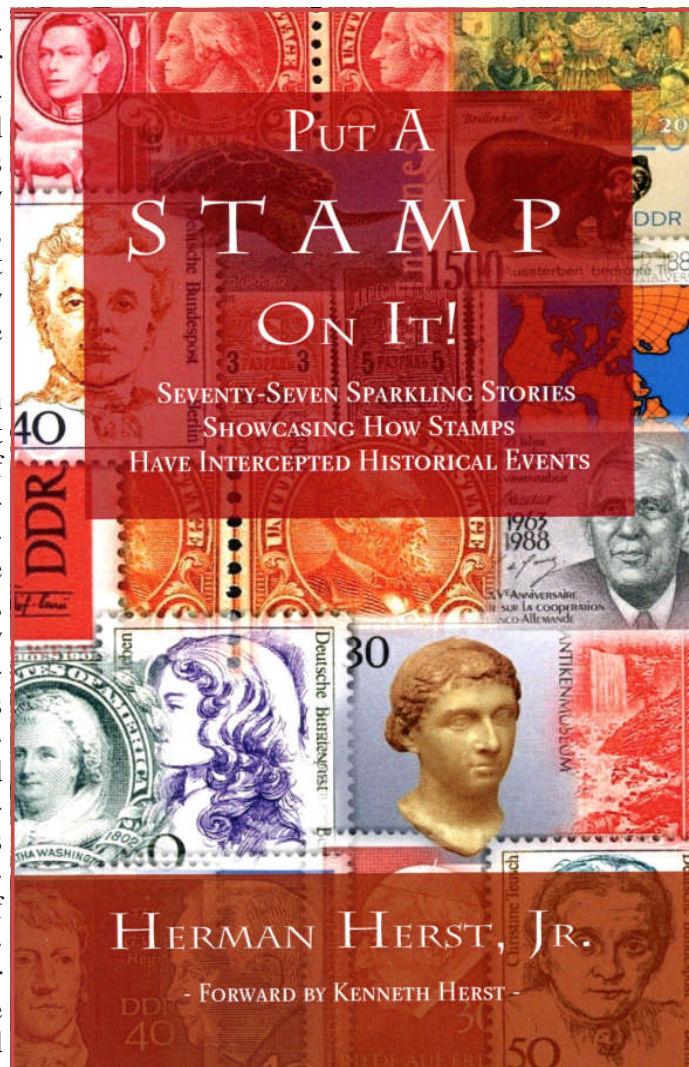
hundred decks of the cards from the same manufacturer. Of course when they arrived the revenues used were the normal perforated ones.

He learned that the card manufacturer began a new card design and made only a small number of decks. When the manufacturer asked the Internal Revenue Service for tax stamps, they said the quantity was so small that they could only send some in imperforate state and the manufacturer would have to cut them apart with scissors. The initial sale of the cards was successful and more cards were made. By the time Herst placed his order for one hundred decks, the perforated stamps were once again available in large quantities. Herst gave the cards away as Christmas gifts. He was so proud of this discovery that he tells it in two different versions in this book, chapters 58 and 70.

As with much of Herman Herst's writings, these stories need to be read with some degree of circumspection. He often did not let facts get in the way of a good story. In one article he refers to the Danish dealer "Georg" Bechsgaard, more likely Robert Bechsgaard. Still, even with this caveat, collectors are invited to obtain this latest entertaining addition to the Herst library.

Treat yourself to some refreshing reading from the master philatelic story teller.

Alan Warren



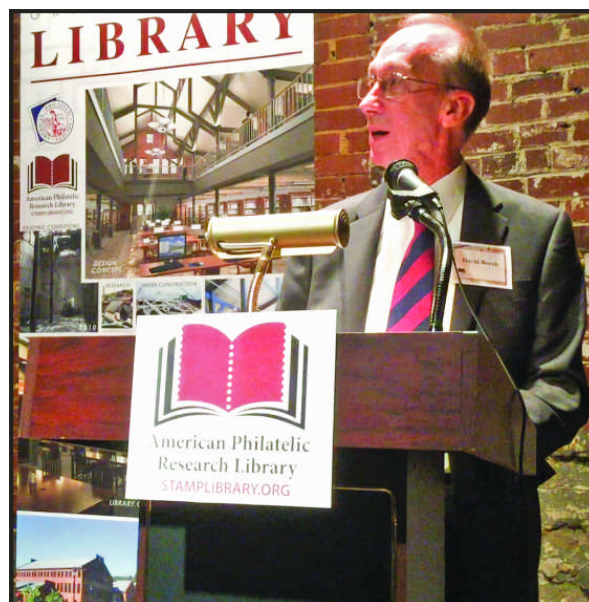


Back in 2001 Robert Lamb, to some controversy, obtained the Match Factory with the grand vision of converting it to the spaces we see today. Mr. Lamb gave David Beech the philatelic curator for the British museum a tour of the facilities.

Mr. Beech while giving the keynote address this October, remembered Mr. Lamb opening the large sliding door into the vast areas, possibly the door we see behind them in the photo above.

Mr. Beech's speech can be seen on YouTube (1). He complemented the APRL and the APS and all the people who worked to make the facility possible. Then he noted that the binding budget needed to be doubled or tripled to catch up with the materials on hand. But he immediately noted the most important project of the age known as digitalization. He noted the recent presentation of the digitized Crawford Philatelic Library (2) that represents the Earl of Crawford's collection of 1.3 million pages. Mr. Beech also mentioned the Global Philatelic Library (3) that links all collectors with almost all the philatelic libraries of the world.

The complete story of the Grand Opening may be seen at the library's blog (4).



1. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hXXsnmxq3iY>
2. Crawford Philatelic Library Digitized, The Philatelic Communicator, Issue 192, 2nd Quarter, 2016.
3. www.globalphilateliclibrary.org.
4. <http://blog.stamplib.org/2016/11/11/library-grand-opening-a-success/>





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Secretary Report 3Q2016

It is requested that all members please note the expiration date in the address panel above your name. Dues notices will be mailed before StampShow in August to all who have not paid through 2016. If you have paid through 2016 it would be appreciated if you could pay your dues for 2017 or beyond to save a mailing this fall.

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Purpose of the Writers Unit #30 of the American Philatelic Society is to encourage and assist philatelic communications, knowledge, and comradeship. Membership is open to anyone interested in philatelic communications.

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